

Message Text

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NODIS
FOR AMB YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT PRETORIA 4593 ACTION SECSTATE AUG 9

QUOTE S E C R E T PRETORIA 4593

NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: MNVC, PARM, SF
SUBJECT: KALAHARI FOLLOW-UP

REF: (A) STATE 183948, (B) STATE 199458, (C) STATE 198528

1. HAD FRIENDLY BUT INCONCLUSIVE SESSION WITH FOURIE THIS MORNING AT WHICH I OUTLINED REF (A) PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSIONS TO CLARIFY AND RESOLVE KALAHARI QUESTIONS. I EXPLAINED THAT WE HAD GREATLY APPRECIATED GENERAL LEMMER'S WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS THE MATTER AND, IN VIEW OF HIS OFFER TO "ANNOTATE" THE IMAGERY, THOUGHT THE PROPOSED PROCEDURE WOULD BE THE BEST WAY TO CLEAR UP QUESTIONS STILL REMAINING ON THE BASIS OF TECHNICAL EVIDENCE AND
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 202114

VISIBLE FEATURES WHICH COULD BE EXPLAINED BY OUR EXPERTS ONLY IN TERMS OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES TESTING.

2. FOURIE LISTENED CAREFULLY BUT TOOK NO NOTES. HE RESPONDED THAT HE WAS NOT INFORMED OF THE SUBSTANCE OF LEMMER'S PRESENTATION TO SMITH AND LOCKE AND DID NOT KNOW HOW OUR REQUEST FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION WOULD BE RECEIVED, AS THE KALAHARI SITE WAS EXCLUSIVELY

A DEFENSE MATTER. HE SAID HE WOULD PASS OUR PROPOSAL ON TO THEM AND LET ME KNOW. HOWEVER, HE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE REQUEST MIGHT ONLY "ANNOY" THE SAG (I.E. CABINET), AS IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHY WE CONTINUED TO BRING THE KALAHARI UP WHEN IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT WE WOULD NOT PROVIDE ANY NUCLEAR FUEL TO KOEBERG IN ANY CASE WITHOUT SAG ADHERENCE TO THE NPT. HE SAW THE KALAHARI AS A SIDE ISSUE IF EVERYTHING ELSE DEPENDED UPON SAG ACCEPTANCE OF THE NPT AND FULL SAFEGUARDS. FURTHER, HE THOUGHT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ACCEPTED PRIME MINISTER VORSTER'S ASSURANCES, YET IT SEEMED WE WANTED TO CHALLENGE THOSE ASSURANCES.

3. I RECALLED AMBASSADOR SMITH'S DISCUSSION OF THIS POINT AND SAID THAT WE WERE NOT IN FACT ASKING SOMETHING THAT WAS IN ANY WAY NEW BUT WERE SIMPLY FOLLOWING UP ON THE SAME MATTER WE HAD RAISED AT THAT TIME, PURSUING GENERAL LEMMER'S SUGGESTION THAT HE COULD BE MORE HELPFUL IF HE COULD SEE AND ANNOTATE THE MATERIALS WE WERE BASING OUR ANALYSIS UPON. WITHOUT GETTING INTO THE QUESTION OF ASSURANCES, I SAID WE WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE ASKED BY CONGRESS AND THE NRC TO SIGNIFY OUR CONFIDENCE THAT THE SAG WOULD ABIDE BY THE NPT AND SAFEGUARDS BEFORE ENTERING INTO THE SETTLEMENT PROCEDURE DISCUSSED DURING SMITH'S VISIT. I SAID WE COULD DO THIS MUCH EASIER IF WE COULD DISPEL ANY DOUBTS OUR OWN EXPERTS HELD ABOUT THE KALAHARI QUESTION.

4. FOURIE SAID HE COULD NOT SEE WHAT GOOD IT WOULD DO FOR SOUTH AFRICA IF THE SAG SATISFIED THE US ON THE KALAHARI, EVEN IF THEY
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 202114

INVITED US TO INSPECT THE SITE, AS IT WAS STILL ONLY THE NPT THAT COUNTED WHEN IT CAME TO ACHIEVING AN ULTIMATE AGREEMENT AND PROVIDING KOEBERG FUEL. HE SAID IT WAS KOEBERG FUEL THAT THEY WERE MOST INTERESTED IN AS THE SAFARI I REACTOR COULD BE CLOSED DOWN. (HOWEVER, I DOUBT WHETHER AEB PRESIDENT ROUX WOULD AGREE WITH SUCH A COMMENT.) FOURIE SAID SOME CABINET MEMBERS ARGUED THAT THE US WOULD ALWAYS FIND SOME LAST MINUTE EXCUSE NOT TO GO AHEAD WITH AN AGREEMENT AND WOULD SEE OUR KALAHARI INTEREST IN THIS LIGHT, PARTICULARLY SINCE SAG ADHERENCE TO THE NPT SHOULD SOLVE ANY USG DOUBTS. SOME WOULD ASK WHAT THE US REALLY WANTED.

5. I SAID I APPRECIATED THE INTERNAL POLITICAL PROBLEM, BUT POINTED OUT THAT WE HAD PROBLEMS HE NEEDED TO UNDERSTAND TOO, INCLUDING AN IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION. I SAID SOME PEOPLE FELT WE WOULD BE OUT ON A LIMB WITH ANY KIND OF NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH SOUTH AFRICA SINCE THERE WOULD INEVITABLY BE FEARS AND SUSPICIONS WHETHER REAL OR STIMULATED ABOUT SA NUCLEAR INTENTIONS. DISPELLING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE KALAHARI SITE WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO MOVE FORWARD WITH CONFIDENCE WITH THE KIND OF SETTLEMENT PROCEDURE AMBASSADOR SMITH HAD PROPOSED TO THEM.

6. FOURIE SAID HE WAS A BIT CONCERNED THAT IT HAD NOT YET BEEN

POSSIBLE FOR FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA TO DISCUSS THE SETTLEMENT PROCEDURE WITH MINISTER OF MINES S.P. BOTHA AND PRIME MINISTER VORSTER. BOTHA HAD JUST LEFT ON ANOTHER TRIP AND THERE WOULD BE FURTHER UNINTENTIONAL DELAY. I SAID THAT AMBASSADOR SMITH HAD RECEIVED BOTHA'S MESSAGE THROUGH AMBASSADOR SOLE (REF B) AND UNDERSTOOD THE PROBLEM. THEN I ASKED ABOUT SOLE'S COMMENT TO HERB KAISER RELATING THE MATTER TO THE WALVIS BAY AND NAMIBIAN ISSUES AND ASKED IF THIS REFLECTED SAG VIEWS. FOURIE ASKED ME TO REPEAT WHAT SOLE SAID, THEN CATEGORICALLY REJECTED IT AS BEING SOLE'S OWN THINKING. HE DID NOT SOUND TOO PLEASED.

7. COMMENT: I SUSPECT THAT FOURIE'S REACTION TO THE IDEA OF FURTHER DISCUSSIONS ON THE KALAHARI REFLECTS THE KIND OF QUESTIONS THE PRIME MINISTER HIMSELF MIGHT ASK AND MAY HAVE BEEN
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 202114

INTENDED TO REGISTER SAG SENSITIVITY ON THIS POINT. NONETHELESS I BELIEVE HE WILL REPORT THE IDEA OBJECTIVELY AND WE MAY STILL GET A GO-AHEAD. I OFFERED TO EXPLAIN THE DISCUSSION PROCESS WE HAD IN MIND TO ANYONE ELSE HE THOUGHT APPROPRIATE AND WILL LEAVE IT AT THAT UNTIL I HEAR FROM HIM.

8. I LEFT WITH FOURIE THE DRAFT CONTRACT AGREEMENT FOR DOE PURCHASE OF RECOVERED FUEL FROM SAFARI I (REF C) WHICH HE PROMISED TO FORWARD TO AEB. EDMONSON. UNQUOTE VANCE

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